

MALDIVES - 2 WEEK SURFERS LOG - 2003

4.8.03 Left Brisbane 11.55pm 3rd Aug Sing Air, very nice airline, arrive Singapore 5am. Shop all day, bored, should have planned day better. Very hot. Left Sing 8.30pm arrive Male 10pm, excited anticipating surf in morning. One good thing came out of Singapore, Ron assisted me to purchase a very good rod and reel. We also enjoyed a drink at the "Long Bar" at Raffles Hotel. Very nice hotel. Try a "Singapore Sling". Slept like a baby aboard "Hamathi".

5.8.03 Up very early amped to be aboard "Hamathi" our surf safari boat for the next two weeks. Comfortable twin cabins with toilet and shower. Sharing room with Shane recently named "The Walrus". Loz shares with Ron, Julie and Carol have cabins to themselves. Anthony, the Frenchman has claims on the master suite as he has been in it for a week. We head north to Cokes and Chickens and we're surfing by 8am. 2-4' and offshore, all good, pretty much all to ourselves. 3 surfs today. PM good anchor at Club Med. Ron, Loz, Carol and myself partied at resort. Great night! Entertainment . . . Plays; dance, theatre and limbo comp. Much fun and drinks.

6.8.03 Up early, 15-20 offshore. 3-4 all enjoying. Food is sensational and very healthy. Cook "Mihail" is Shrilankin and is making every effort to please. The crew Moosa Hussien and Captain could not be more helpful. Omelettes, toast, cheese, fruit, juice for buffet breakfast after early surf at Cokes. Still 3'-4'. Afternoon session at Chickens real good. Swell up a little, great left all to ourselves. More surf boats arrive at Cokes/Chickens, we leave for safe anchor at Hinafushi Island. Fully Monty from top deck of boat, beers, music, and lots a fun. Plenty of beers. Sleep well all night.

7.8.03 Wind always offshore. Swell at 4-6', 'Jails" for first session, very clear water and Loz, Julie and Carol snorkel in line up and hand feed reef fish. Loz threw his goggles and snorkel to Carol as a set wave loomed and used flippers to treat Ron and I to a body surfing exhibition. He got barrelled on a big one hand at full stretch in the opening. We all enjoyed an uncrowded session. Breakfast, lunch and dinner at night are a banquet of great food and the boat boys Moosa & Hussien, the cook Nihial and the Captain are very special people. They're constantly doing all they can to please. Surfed Sultans 4-5' after lunch, good waves again but wind in face. Slept well after funny night on boat. Ron, Loz and I had beers, the others Shane, "The Walrus" aptly nicknamed as he struggles to get his gut over the gunnel of the tender boat, Julie & Carol are all happy I think and hope. It is very relaxing here on board "Hamathi" and I couldn't understand anyone not enjoying. Anthony, the Frenchman, makes our group of seven and he is very enjoyable company.

8.8.03 Up at 6am. Surfing "Chickens" 4-6', best session so far, long rides. Really good and some barrels. Cokes as good across the channel. 3 surfs today, all good, still blowing offshore between 5 to 20 knots. Found Cory in line up at Cokes today, still a surf guide on a nice boat, which we name "The Indian Restaurant" because of its unusual superstructure. Cokes got very good late today. Have not had beers till after 5pm each day. Really enjoying the great surf and a few evening beers. Watched "Active 8" in the wheelhouse and went to bed early. Good boys and girls we are.

9.8.03 Moored at "Colas" the village makes Coco Cola and has one shop medical etc. Surf is good again. Early session, still blowing offshore but Chickens and Cokes both barreling. Loz getting heaps even I'm getting inside "the green room" at Chickens. Late arvo surf equally as good. Many in the water, about 20 but quality barreling Cokes. Dale Chapman invites me to his boat the "DESIRE" a 106 foot floating palace for beers. He says he owes me as I found his wallet at the International Airport Brisbane and returned it to him as we were embarking. Saved his bacon

really! Anchored in Colao harbour 5.30pm. Had yet another great evening meal and organised all our group to transfer to Dale's boat. Awesome would be another appropriate name for the "Desire". 12 passengers and 8-10 crew. We made a party and had many laughs and drinks. Carol proposed to Hundi the barman and they decided to marry!! I suggested the Capitain get a bible, which he went to get and all present thought it a real fun idea especially Hundi. The surf guide Hamid on Desire was a brat. 18 years and pissed. Very bad for Maldivian to be this way. He broke 2 wine glasses, spewed and fell overboard. All had a good night. Julie had 2 cocktails and spun out. Barman made strong.

10.8.03 7am up and anchor in channel. Cokes and Chickens going off. It's great to relax on foredeck and watch perfect lefts "Chickens" and perfect rights "Cokes" from the deck chairs. Nothing better except surfing this. Loz is first in water while we have breakfast. He comes back stoked, he says best barrels yet at Chickens. Anthony, Ron and I take the next shift in water and get some of the best yet. More surfers soon spoil the party, it gets crowded so we return to boat and relax. Shane "The Walrus" has water on ear and we need fresh water so we go to Colas harbour. Takes only 5 mins. No doc so on to Club Med and Shane's ear is syringed. He gets cheeky again after Doc extracts wax cotton buds and an old sand shoe from his ear. Dinner and evening meal in Club Med anchorage.

11.3.03 Monday. Escort Julie & Carol to reception at Lahifushi and then on to their room. They seem happy with week on boat and sorry to leave boat. Loz, Ron & I play table tennis and Loz is the victor. He's happy about that and it gets better as he borrows Anthony's board and gets Lohis 4' while Ron and I enjoy beers at the Surf bar. Ordered surf prints from Occy's? shop which we will pick up later in week. Back to Chickens for late surf and spent night at Colas. Pretty quiet. Beer watched Active 8 and bed early.

12.3.03 Chickens 7am Ron, Loz & Anthony surf 4-5' while Walrus and I film from Island. Get best pictures yet of Loz mainly, barrelled but very blustery conditions. Starting to feel the need to rest from surf and hope for a change to the strong wind conditions. Ron looks for a beer at 10.30am and I'm starting to wither in my resolve not to drink during day. Ron's beer tally after 7 days about 100, mine at 60. I'm so well behaved. Crew, the Walrus and Anthony are all astounded. Ron catching most fish and I enjoying my new rod and reel. Hope to catch a good one on it. All enjoying and I'm hoping Loz stays third week. Sleep Colas. Hoping for finer weather and better surf tomorrow. Boys make wax man statue with huge penis after I retire.

13.8.03 Up early 5.30am. Anthony last surfing day. Good waves Cokes still only 4-5' but good barrels. Anthony gets the best and Ron and I get a few while Loz films from Island. Anthony surfs for 4 hours as its his last day on boat and we head for Lohis to pick up surf prints. Occy's shop can't get today and we hope he'll send by email. Julie and Carol want to shop in Malé tomorrow (Thursday) and we arrange to meet for lunch. We then head for Malé and sleep in airport harbour. I think the Capitain wants to see his wife and disappears for night. Looking forward to meeting owner tomorrow 11am.

14.8.03 Anthony leaves for Sri Lanka 7am and we are now 4. We all go to Malé to check it out and find a bustling city. Lots of scooters and horns beeping. Bought a few things and Ron shopped for souvenirs. Moosa, our boat boy is our guide and has friend everywhere with scooters. My personal guide is Ali and he has a brand new Honda scooter and has police siren fitted. Makes people move out of way faster. Ron and Loz and Moosa have lunch at nice café and I meet Ibrahim in Naseer at The Palasada Hotel restaurant. We have coffee and non alcoholic beer. He is the owner of our boat and an importer and we discuss future trips

for Core Travel Co. and the possibility of Surf X Cess product in Maldives. Fruitful discussions and we agree to communicate further. He will deliver price list for "Hamathi" for next 12 months and give brochures and all help he can.

We leave Malé and travel to South Malé atoll to check surf breaks. Swell much smaller and we proceed to Southern most break Foxeys. Only 1-2' and Loz get surf cuts when reef sucks dry. Beautiful down here but no surf. We sleep and agree to fish tomorrow.

15.8.03 Better weather today. We cruise south to fishing grounds. I finish my book "High Society" by Ben Elton. A great read and Loz has just started. Ron catches a mackerel and we lose a huge one while trailing on the way down. I treat Loz's cuts with benedine and the weather looks better and better. No wind or only 5 knots. We fish a reef only 3-4' deep and catch 6 sweet lip on hand lines. Great fun and different to any method back home. Lunch at 12.30 another great meal and weather is better than anything so far. I went follow fishing (trailing) for tuna bonito etc. I scored nice size tuna on Ron's rod. Great fishing day and evening when Loz, Ron and I and the crew all caught more reef fish. Very isolated here at Filadu atoll, the furthest south we go.

16.8.03 Back to Gurus. We find perfection. No wind, long glassy lefts at Lucky Joes, barrelling and only 4 of us. No other surf boats in sight. We have a long session and all agree best yet. Loz caught a 8 lb. reef fish on my new set up and is stoked as it's the biggest fish he's ever caught and the fight on the light rod and reel was exciting. More surf on our own after lunch, good but not as good. Capitain (Mohamid) takes us to Island to meet his friends and we do a little shopping. The reception is very friendly. A little football and photos. A few beers back on boat taste so good after the best day yet.

17.8.03 Up early and find Lucky Joes and Gurus only 2' on sets. Up anchor and head back to Jails. I receive a call from Julie (16.8.03), she and Carol are having wonderful time. I'm relieved as they were missing the boat and company.

Arrive at Jails 10am. Surf good 4'. Had good session with Loz, Ron snorkels and raves over fish life and coral. Walrus decides to leave Wed 20th. Then there will be only 3!! On boat. Very comfortable. Ron's moved to master suite and is very comfortable. The sets keep powering through at Jails and only one other boat. The weather continues to hold. Excellent conditions. Interaction with crew on another level and we're all happy and very relaxed. Who wouldn't be here. I'm writing my journal in the wheelhouse from where I see every wave coming through "Jails". On the other side of channel "Honkys", "Sultans" and "Pasta Pt." All within range. Loz's discman puts the final touch to the situation.

18.8.03 Up early and surf Sultans 4-5 yet again. Surfing better and getting a lot fitter. More good food fresh fish, Sweet Lip and Sushimi. We also eat a coconut and tuna dish which was good and different. Snacks between meals can be bananas, coconut and dried tuna, pancakes, biscuits, tea or coffee. More beers at night and Ron's the champ. He has beers during the day and I've resisted the temptation.

19.8.03 Back to Chickens and Cokes still same swell. Spend time on Island. Wind blowing 15-20 knots. Purchase phone recharge card with Mussa's help and send text to home. Replies from Sam and Kim. Nice to hear from home. Surf Chickens in afternoon. Loz and I get good waves and Loz gets attacked by a crab. Many spinning dolphins keep us company.

20.8.03 Surf Chickens in morning and get more good stuff. Ron's on the improve and scores waves. His confidence was down after leg rope tangled around his neck and choked him while being flogged across the reef. Walrus's last day and we deliver him to Malé. Farewell "Walrus".

Loz, Ron and I spend 2 hours in Malé and check "towns". Lots of body boarders. We have drinks at a nice garden restaurant and return to boat at 7pm for dinner and Ron and I share 1 bottle of Bordeaux Red. Good French drop.

21.8.03 Waiting for group of 5 in airport harbour. More of same really: one day then the next.

MALDIVIAN HOLIDAY (ODE TO BRIAN)

You promised me a princess, dark and lean and full of fun.

A fair maiden from the Maldives, I could live with in the sun.

The surf is great, big waves to cut and weave.

We're at a surfing mecca, better would be hard to perceive.

We've had a ball riding up and down and carving at our best.

Sometimes I fall in a big wipe-out while trying to fulfil my quest.

My heart is in my mouth as I take off in the swell.

The drop is mean, on certain waves you fall, like in a well,

but then I turn along the wave and ride it to the end.

The barrels make your chest push out and adrenalin rush you send.

You promised me a princess but I'll settle for the surf.

Now I'll go home a happy man fulfilled when I'm back on Aussie turf.

Ron

INDIAN OCEAN